

A Fork in the Road

by Sonia

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Summary: Searching for who you really are can lead you back to that fork in the road

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> Disclaimer: All these nice people, except for the one you haven't met yet are the sole property of Southern Star. I'm just borrowing them for the amusement of my friends and myself.

Summary: A search for who you really are can sometimes lead you back to that fork in the road.

> Timeframe: An off shoot of the current series.

Author's note: A strange thought struck me one day. There had to be more to Jeff Hawker than his beloved fish and paperwork. So this is what I came up with. Dedicated to anyone who has gone back to that fork in the road in his or her own lives and taken the other track.

>

>
 A trail of darkness followed Jeff Hawker down the corridor as he flipped off the light switches in the now vacant offices.

>
 He didn't often work an afternoon shift but made the effort every so often just to keep in touch with the operational side of his job.

>
 It shocked the hell out of the troops when he did though. Poor Janevski looked like she needed the paramedics when he walked through the door and took his place at the shift supervisor's desk. The night had been a quiet one and Jeff was not happy about it.

>
 Once he used to relish quiet nights to catch up on the endless reports and paperwork. Now it allowed him too much time to think about life.

>
 Speaking of paperwork, he would happily set a match to the next file that came through bearing the dreaded O word - Olympics.

>
 Everyone at the station was as patriotic as the next person but the continual round of exercises and edicts including no annual leave for at least a month before the Games had really left everyone wondering what it was all about at times.

>
 Life would go on after the Olympics, he kept telling everyone, even at times when he did not believe it himself.

>

> This job was his life. He had always wanted to be a police officer - but what had it cost him to get to the heights of Chief Inspector?

> His marriage to Gail was definitely a casualty of the job. Like so many of his mates, devotion to his career had meant his marriage had been hit full force and he was left on his own. The kids were growing up and soon they would have a life away from their parents.

> There used to be such a spark between him and Gail - not just sparks of the physical kind but that rare mental chemistry that turned a small blaze into a bushfire. The verbal jousting was one of the most attractive qualities of their relationship.

> As Gail and he began drifting apart, the threads of their mental and physical relationship unravelled.

> He needed those same mental sparks and verbal jousts in his personal life that working with Helen gave him from time to time. Even though he looked on Rachel as a type of younger sister, Jeff still remembered their debates over everything from policing issues to child rearing with fondness.

> Was Frank Holloway smarter than all of them when he opted to get out and chase whatever his version of the Holy Grail was?

>
 After his heart seizure a few months ago, Jeff believed he had a clearer sense of where he needed to be in his life. It was time was Chief Inspector Hawker to sit back and let Jeff Hawker find where he belonged in the world.

>
 He remembered one of the tacticians he met at a command course a few years back. Carly Blake was a top operator, the argument they had in the middle of the course about using or not using the media during a particular scenario had become the subject of many bar room debates for the rest of the course.

>
 Carly gave as good as she got, if not better at times, and still maintained her femininity in what was still such a man's world. Under other circumstances, Jeff wouldn't have minded getting to know Carly better. At the time, he still took his vows to Gail seriously and let the thought pass to the back of his mind without further debate.

>
 Yeah, it had been a few years since they had talked. Jeff wondered what she was doing now. You could always go back to the fork in the road where you had turned off and take the other path.

>
 After checking where Carly was via the internal email system, Jeff began to dial.

>
 "Good evening, Bankstown Police is Carly Blake working tonight? Thanks. Hi Carly, it's Jeff Hawker, Sydney Water Police, we met at one of those command courses a few years back.

>
 Jeff threw back his head and laughed as Carly started to pay out on him about the last press conference he gave, not to mention a couple of incidents from the tacticians course he hoped had sunk into Police Service folklore by now.

>
 "Yeah.I'd love to catch up again. How about coffee some time next week? Excellent. I'll talk to you then. Cheers."

>
 Jeff replaced the receiver on its handset and smiled. Going

back to that fork in the road looked like it was the right thing to do after all.

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file.